New Things Not Found in Any Books

How to Avoid SHARING YOUR HOME WITH RATS

THE recent threatened outbreak of bubonic plague in New Orleans emphasizes again the importance of exterminating the rats which science now knows to be the means of spreading the germs of this dread disease.

Dr. French Simpson, of the United States Public Health Service, gives some timely advice as to how any building can be made absolutely rat-proof. If his advice were generally followed every community would soon be free from the menace of rats and also of the repugnant insects which make their home in the rat's pelt.

Since rats are able to live between ceilings, in walls or roofs, can pass through from roof to roof by telephone and electric wires, and in other uncalculated ways, it is obvious that any plan for effective rat-proofing must take in every inch and corner of the building, from sub-cellar and basement to the roof, and the clothes-lines thereof.

In rat-proofing a new building, if it is a frame structure it should be placed on a foundation wall not less than six feet thick, of brick or concrete, or such material as will be impervious to rats. This wall must be laid absolutely without a break around the entire building, not less than 18 inches beneath the surface of the surrounding soil (lest rats burrow under the walls and harbor beneath the building); and this wall must go upward flush with the inner surface of the floor above.

Floor joists must be imbedded in this wall, or the spaces between the joists must be filled in and perfectly closed, up to the wall level. Openings in the wall to admit plumbing or electric wires must be at once cemented to the full depth of the wall. Ventilation openings in the wall should be screened with cast iron gratings or wire cloth not less than 20 gauge nor greater than one-half inch. Into wall openings for basement doors these doors must fit exactly when closed, and should, if possible, be provided with appliances for automatic closing.

The ground area enclosed by foundation walls is a most important consideration. If no foods are to be prepared, stored or sold on the premises, this area must be covered with a layer of concrete at least three feet thick; and above this a floor of tongue-and-groove lumber should be placed, disregarding the dead space remaining between.

But if foodstuffs are to be prepared in the house, for commercial or other purposes, the ground area must be filled in with earth or sand up within 3 inches of the top of the foundation wall, over which is then placed a layer of concrete as before, three or more inches thick; and upon this must next be laid cement at least one-half inch thick.

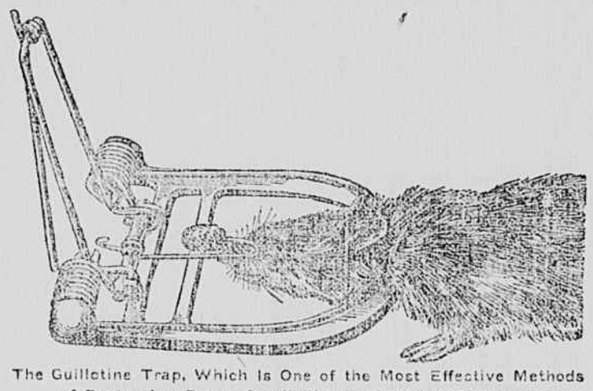
Ground areas must be concreted, because rats escaping through accidental openings subsequently made in the flooring will burrow and harbor in the ground beneath.

Whenever possible, and not prohibited by fire ordinance, basement ceilings should remain open and unsealed, so that rat refuge between them and the floor above may be prevented. If a finished ceiling is required, this should be made and kept rat-tight.

If expense prevents the installation of such rat-proof foundation as described, rat-proofing of frame structures (if not contrary to building laws) may be accomplished by elevation, on free underpinning, not less than 18 inches above the surface of the surrounding soil; the ground area must here remain clear of lumber and debris, and clean all the time, lest a convenient, congenial and perfect rat harbor be provided.

Roof doors and hatches must fit snugly and remain closed when not in use. Ventilators, skylights and

The SUREST PROTECTION Against These DISEASE-BREEDING RODENTS Is to Make Every Building RAT-PROOF



The Guillotine Trap, Which Is One of the Most Effective Methods of Destroying Rats. Small Pieces of Vienna Sausage or Bacon Make the Best Bait for It.

unused chimney flues should be screened with galvanized iron wire cloth not less than 20 gauge nor greater than one-half inch mesh.

A careful inspection of the completed building is imperative; this is essential also following alterations or repairs.

Many city buildings are not rat-proof, though claimed to be so, because of the omission of screens to basement windows, to skylights and other roof openings; but principally by reason of the neglect of plumbers, electricians and others properly to close openings around electric wires and pipes for conveying water, gas or steam.

Defects in the sidewalk must be repaired, and defective or absent lens lights in the sidewalks replaced.

Old broken or abandoned pipes make a fine highway for rats between the street or sewer and the basement; they must be stopped permanently with cement, if they can't be got rid of otherwise. The same must be done with openings around and within electric wire conduits. Chimney flues may convey electric wires, which rats like nothing better than to climb.

If rats have found refuge between ceiling and the floor above, this harborage can be destroyed only by removal of the entire ceiling. Defects or breaks in walls must be repaired; unfinished walls completed. Boxed toilet bases should be removed and solid foundations installed. Boxed plumbing should be opened up. Shelving and counters must contain no inclosed dead space. Food bins must be rat-tight, with close fitting covers. Dead space beneath show windows must be opened up or be rat-proofed by accurate construction. Remove all accumulated rubbish. Screen lower ventilators in elevator shafts with galvanized iron-mesh wire cloth.

Non-rat-proof buildings are all frame structures, with or without basements, and generally without foundation, floors and walls impervious to rats. Most buildings are of this class, and they represent the principal obstacle to be overcome in the rat-proofing of cities and towns.

All such buildings should be remodelled and constructed with brick or concrete walls; but since the area wall in such cases is only for rat-proofing, the foundation need not be disturbed, the area wall being erected just within (preferably) or without and against the old foundation.

This area wall should be of brick, stone or concrete, not less than 6 inches thick, extending not less than 18 inches beneath the surface of the surrounding soil, and upward until flush with the under surface of the floor above.

Should the building rest on a brick or concrete foundation an additional wall will not be required; but care should be used to see that the foundation wall extends entirely around the building. Wherever lacking in this respect or otherwise defective, the building should be repaired.

If floor joists rest on the top of this wall it should be continued upward between such joists until flush with the under surface of the floor above.

The ground areas or basement floors of such structures and upper floors and roofs must be treated as for new buildings, being especially careful that the additional rat-proofing requirements are employed when such buildings contain foodstuffs.

Many rats can usually be caught under the front steps; remember this when remodelling.

Rat food is just waste food or food refuse such as is thrown carelessly in vacant lots or around garbage cans, or into such cans that are imperfect, or surplus food intended for chickens, or dropped in transportation or handling. The imperfect garbage can provides the most important rat food supply in the community, which cannot get rid of the rat until the imperfect garbage can is replaced.

Rats can, by the means here described, be kept out of people's houses. But if a town wants to get rid of rats (which, being driven out of rat-proof houses, will all the more populate the non-rat-proof dwellings), a perfect garbage can system must be installed. This is a civic necessity.

Chicken yards offer a fine source of rat food; such yards should be either rat-proofed or abandoned. You can rat-proof a coop or chicken enclosure by means of an area wall as described for frame structures, the ground area being covered with three inches of concrete and the side walls above the foundation constructed of wire cloth not less than 20 gauge nor greater than one-half inch mesh, to extend upward at least six feet. Chickens may range in the open yard, but must be fed only within the rat-proofed coop.

How WALL PAPER AFFECTS YOUR CHARACTER

"SHOW me where you live," says the psychologist, "and I will tell you what kind of man or woman you are." According to this theory the furniture, pictures, books and other things with which we surround ourselves not only reflect our characters, but have a strong influence in shaping them for good or bad.

A few years ago the idea that such a trivial thing as the color of the paper on our walls could have any appreciable influence on a person's health and character would have been thought absurd. Now, however, physiologists and psychologists are agreed that the choice of wall paper is a matter deserving of a great deal more thought than most of us give it.

This is particularly true of rooms occupied by children. The glare of white walls, formerly thought ideal for nurseries and play rooms, is now declared by oculists to be positively ruinous to the eyes of babies and young children.

Red is another color to be used cautiously in children's rooms. Some psychologists go to the length of declaring that deep-red wall papers, especially when accentuated at night by red-shaded lights, can have a real part in weakening the morals of growing boys and girls.

Different color schemes are required for boys and girls. The dainty pinks and blues which enter so charmingly into the plan for a girl's bedroom are unsuited for the vigorous, athletically inclined boy, whose mind unconsciously demands much more solid and brilliant colorings.

As an experiment a boy of eleven in a wealthy home was given a dainty gilt-and-white room. His sister, just a year older, was put into a large oaken-furnished bedroom, where she surveyed only dull-toned furniture, heavy damask curtains and wall paper of a deep red tone.

In one month, every possible bit of white and gold in the boy's room was covered with pine-branches; the "pretty girl" pictures were stacked in the closet; boxing gloves, gauntlets, dumb bells, and Indian blankets tossed over bed and chairs, took as much of the dainty atmosphere away as possible. While in the girl's room light-colored posters, photos, trailing-vines, and even a gold chair, usurped from her brother's room, while he was out gathering cedar branches, showed her feminine revolt against so much primness and unadorned richness.

How to WIND AN EIGHT-DAY CLOCK

THOUSANDS of excellent time pieces are damaged by being wound too tightly or permitted to run until they are almost run down.

The mechanism of a watch or clock will wear longer and render more valuable service if not placed under a strain.

The best time pieces will be more nearly accurate if they are wound not too tightly and never allowed to run completely down.

The most satisfactory way to wind an eight-day clock is to wind it twice in that many days, and to wind it only half or a little more than half way each time. This keeps the machinery free from any unusual strain, and the works will continue to render efficient work much longer than when the clock is permitted to run the time limit and then wound up to its utmost capacity.

A watch that is wound twice in twenty-four hours will give more perfect satisfaction in time than if the watch is wound up tight once every twenty-four hours, as most persons do.

Do not permit the watch to run down, and only wind it a part of the amount needed to wind it up completely.

Why Mexicans Believe Annexation by the U. S. Is Their Destiny

By Wallace Thompson.
(Former Editor of the Mexican Herald.)

MEXICANS of every class regard subjugation to the United States as their country's ultimate destiny. This is a feeling which in Latin America is not entirely original. In Mexico, however, there are serious thinkers, statesmen worthy of any nation's best period, who have seriously maintained that nothing in the ordinary course of history can prevent the United States from ultimately conquering and annexing Mexico, and then the lesser States to the south of her. The most significant of these prophets was the late Ignacia Mariscal.

Mariscal, who until his death seven years ago was Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, was one of the great diplomatists of our time. Few statesmen have understood so well the interplay of forces which make the complex history of the world. The sincerest friend Porfirio Diaz ever had was this little, lean, bowed old man with the long dark hair and the white imperial who took the portfolio of Foreign Affairs in Diaz's earliest Cabinet and held it till his death. He, perhaps more than Diaz himself, made possible the creation of the mighty oligarchy under which Mexico prospered for forty years.

It was Mariscal who kept Europe and the United States at bay while the Diaz Government found its feet, who paved the way for the favorable loans which Jose Yves Limantour as Finance Minister was able to negotiate in Europe for the building of modern Mexico, and who stood as the firm buffer between Diaz the President and the rough Indian instincts of Diaz the Mexican—the same instincts which made Madero fail and are hastening Huerta to his grave.

Mariscal was the soul of the Diaz regime, and those who read history in causes will ultimately trace the present chaos back to his death, four years before the fall of Diaz. For it was Mariscal, standing at the elbow of General Diaz, who kept his great friend not only at peace with the world and with hands upheld by every Government in Christendom, but also close to the humble Indians who loved him and believed in him.

Only after Mariscal died did Diaz begin to forget his friends, the peons, who called him affectionately "Don Porfirio," and knew that, whatever might come of wrong, whatever abuse jefes politicos might pile on them, there was always Don Porfirio in Mexico City to whom they could go and receive a hearing and justice. All the long years that Mariscal lived this was the spirit of the Diaz regime, but when the Foreign Minister died selfish, grasping, grafting officials got the master's ear, the old man let them have their way, and the Indians who had journeyed from Oaxaca and far Quintana Roo to tell him of their humble grievances were turned back without an audience for the first time in memory.

It was not oil, or railroads, or land laws, or money that brought about the fall of Diaz and the crumbling of the fabric of government he had built up. That fabric was destined to go with Diaz, as none knew better than Diaz himself. But that the end came as and when it did was the direct and inevitable result of Don Porfiro's forgetting the humble serfs who had faith in him—the old, old story of every despotism. But Diaz did not forget until Mariscal was no longer there to remind him.

It was this Don Ignacio Mariscal, frail and gentle, who expressed one day the far-sighted belief of the Mexicans in the ultimate designs of the United States for annexation.

In the Alameda, the beautiful little park in the heart of the capital, Mariscal, in his old age, used to walk every morning before going to his office in the Foreign Relations Building not far away. There, one such morning, an American editor, long his close friend, found him, and together they walked in the sunlight under the cypress and banana trees. It was just after the battle of Manilla, and Mariscal expressed the conviction, which all Americans were then disavowing, that the United States would annex the Philippines. The American expressed his faith in his Government, but Mariscal went on, musing:

"Ah, well; it is very good for Mexico, that news. You will have your hands full, so that you will not be able to turn this way for some years to come." The old man smiled his shrewd, sweet smile, and that was all. And Mariscal had never guessed wrong.

The opinion of the great diplomatist was, of course, the most significant, but even in those days he was not alone. Mexicans of standing would discuss the same subject calmly with their American friends, and in circles where thinking men met it was held not unworthy of the calmest and keenest minds.

Of course, there was extravagance, to more practical American minds, in some of the assertions—in most of them, in fact. Even at the height of Diaz's power, for instance, his enemies loved to assert confidently that he held his "throne" only because the Mexicans feared intervention from the United States in case of another revolution. They went further, so far, indeed, as to state that a great daily newspaper of Mexico which was printed in English made Diaz possible, because its support and interpretation of his Government influenced American public opinion in his favor and kept it from breaking forth as it would be sure to do were the real facts known, etc., etc.

Mexicans always seemed to have exaggerated opinions of the interest Americans took in their internal affairs. But one has to wonder now if their extravagant emotions did not see farther and more clearly—as instinct often does—than our elaborate knowledge of all the facts would allow us.

They were used to conquerors, and in his cups not a brownskinned man jack of them but would roar out anathemas against the "gachupins" (Spaniards), using thus the only Aztec word they knew, while asserting that in his vitiated half-breed veins flowed the blood of Indian kings. When sober he was docile and gentle and hating—Villa has given us a glimpse of the depth of that calm hatred.

To this simple peon the American "gringos" were only a new and queer sort of conqueror. The peon long since came to the conclusion that the Americans who were flooding the country were but the advance guard of an invading army which would come, at last, to take Mexico and oust the government. Toward the last the news had gotten abroad very generally amongst the native workmen that in the United States an able-bodied Mexican was paid from three to five pesos a day for his work, as against the fifty centavos of less he received in Mexico. The possibility of an American government with work for all at increased wages was therefore not entirely disagreeable to men whose only patriotism was individual. The American who dealt with the working class direct was therefore never surprised when, if he talked with one of his peons, he found himself expected to answer intelligently some question of this sort:

"When is it, Senor, that you Americans are coming down to take Mexico and pay us all three pesos a day for work like this?"

This was the spirit of the Mexicans up to the outbreak of the present series of civil wars, a spirit of intellectual expectancy and fatalism, not hostile and only doubtfully resentful. The cases are not isolated, but typical, and will be recognized by anyone who knows his Mexico. Four years of war have changed the surface attitude, of course, but underneath is still the stolid conviction of the Mexican that it is only a matter of time until the American flag gets all of the salutes in Mexico, and peace and prosperity reign indyllically over the rich storehouses of unopened mountains and untilled fields.

These are feelings which all American do not take very seriously. Many are sure that if actual intervention is to come that Mexico will be handled as Cuba has been, and quickly taught self-government. But those who watch Cuba with open eyes are still frankly skeptical of our success there, and now the Mexican problem looms even greater than Cuba ever did.

How much fact is there back of the bland confidence abroad that the American Government has a really definite policy of diplomacy? In the light of the apparent helter-skelter handling of the Mexican situation, most Americans continue to disbelieve even to-day over the Mexican fears of 1898.

But has anything happened to dissipate those fears? Perhaps Mariscal spoke more from an understanding of his own countrymen than from any deep appreciation of the American, but have we failed to react in everything exactly as he anticipated we would. Has fate or the traditions of our State Department allowed us to escape our destiny, or Mexico to escape hers? Has the introduction of an entirely new set of ideals into American Government in the present Administration been able to prevent us from stepping into an advanced position toward Mexico, and our virtual abrogation of the treaty of 1849? Can anything now prevent us from assuming some sort of protectorate over Mexico, war or no war?

It is a fact never published that during Grant's Administration, when Mexico was seething with Civil War, previous to the rise of the Diaz government, the problem of establishing an American protectorate was brought up again in Washington and an elaborate exchange of notes with European powers took place. Only the success of Diaz in bringing peace to the battle-scarred land prevented our assuming at that time the attitude of protector and conqueror which Mexicans regard as our natural destiny. The documents are all in the archives of the State Department; perhaps they may yet be brought to light.

There is no reason to believe that President Johnson or President Grant or their ministers was any more anxious for intervention than is President Wilson's Administration. Events shaped themselves to force our hand, as they have shaped themselves in the past few months, despite frantic efforts to avoid an issue. Once the mighty Juarez and once the greater Diaz forestalled the play. To-day there seems no Juarez and no Diaz.

Here in the United States we have been looking out over the country and putting our ears to the ground and feeling the pulse of public opinion by reading all the exchanges, down to the weekly weaklies with patent insides out in Wyoming, and we have declared that America does not want war. President Wilson has been asserting it with the frenzied faith of one who must make it true. Not one of us but prays it, and not one of us but knows that we have no need for war and little need for a national honor that Mexico can harm. But all the same we cheer when the news of the order to the fleet goes out, straighten our shoulders over the firmness at last of our Watchful Waiting Government, and are ready to have the pianist play "Dixie," "The Star Spangled Banner" and moving pictures of the flag, the navy and the army thrown on the screen while we cheer frantically, after the style of 1898, and the army and the navy march on to death and honor.

What do the Mexicans know about us that we do not know? What did Don Ignacio Mariscal mean and how far into the future did his keen old eyes see? Was it us alone, or Mexico alone, or civilization or our innate barbarism alone? We can only ask questions, in stirring times. Answers have to wait on events.

Meanwhile those who have known and loved Mexico remember only depreciatory laughter when their serious, thinking Mexican friends asserted that the time would come when we would be their conquerors, and patronizingly we think of the gentle peon, now carrying a musket and practicing on his friends against the day when he shall trade his life for a life as good as our own, but who half a dozen years ago, with the grime of honest toil on his hands, asked respectfully:

"When it is, Senor, that you Americans are coming down to take Mexico and pay us three pesos a day wages, as they pay on the railroads in the United States of the North?"

THE BLUE-COVERED ENVELOPE--- A Short Story with a Pointed Moral

A BRIGHT, sunny morning in August the gates of the great prison opened to a prisoner whose term had just expired. He was Oscar Valdemar Napoleon Blom, a journeyman tailor.

Blom had served nine months for the theft of an overcoat. But his heart was glad, for in the inside pocket of his coat, next to his certificate of birth, he carried a certificate of good behavior signed by the governor of the prison and a blue envelope containing three bills of ten crowns.

It was not a very large amount. To him, however, it seemed a small fortune on which he had founded many plans for his future.

He felt free and easy now, with a feeling approaching happiness. He was rather hungry, however, for he had barely touched breakfast, and was looking forward to a visit to a certain cozy restaurant for a meal of a juicy steak, with fried onions and a bottle, or perhaps two, of good Swedish beer.

He then decided to carry out his plans of calling on certain charitable business men in the city to whom the Governor of the prison had recommended him to go. It was still too early, however, and as the weather was warm he set off for Liljeholm to walk in the woods of which he had dreamed so often in his cell.

Blom had grown up on a farm situated on a hillside at the edge of the forest a few miles south of Stockholm. He had been apprenticed to a tailor in the southern part of the capital. Later on he became engaged to Theresa, who was no longer young, but had a snug sum in the bank.

He grew fond of amusements and on Summer evenings he went from one cafe to another—sometimes with his sweetheart, but quite as often with Edith, a dark-haired little seamstress who was a friend of his fiance. She was a vivacious little creature with sparkling eyes and ruby lips and Blom caught himself wishing that Edith possessed the far less attractive Theresa's bank account.

In the meantime he kissed the red lips of the one and borrowed money from the other.

But the day came when all this came to an abrupt end. The tailor he worked for went bankrupt and he lost his job. Theresa promised to help him and drew some money from the bank. She was to lend him thirty crowns, but Blom, during a lover's quarrel, snatched the money and ran away.

The next day she accused him of theft. At first he denied the charge but finally confessed, and was sent to jail.

This was his first affair with the Police, but since then he had been several times punished for begging and now finally for the theft of the overcoat.

As he was walking now along the dusty road to Liljeholm he saw a young woman a little ahead of him and hurried his pace to catch up with her. When he got close to her, his heart almost stopped beating. It was Edith. At the same moment she turned around, looked at him and exclaimed:

"Why is it really you, Valdemar?"

She was pleased to meet him, and Blom let her talk without saying much himself.

A great raindrop splashed upon his nose and Blom awoke. He sat up and rubbed his eyes. Had he really been asleep? He was alone and it was beginning to rain. He looked about dimly remembering Edith.

His hat and coat were lying at his side. Suddenly an awful thought struck him and he felt nervously for his inside pocket. It was empty! The blue envelope was gone—the envelope with his money and references from the governor.